



Disconnected Postsecondary Youth on the Autism Spectrum

What services do they receive? What are their service needs?

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Background

- Over 50% of youth on the autism spectrum are *disconnected from school or work* in the first 2 years after high school.
- This rate of disconnection averages 35% in the first 6 years following high school.
- These rates of disconnection are higher than found among youth with other types of disability.
- There is a steep drop-off of service use as youth exit high school.
- Little is known about patterns of service use among disconnected youth.

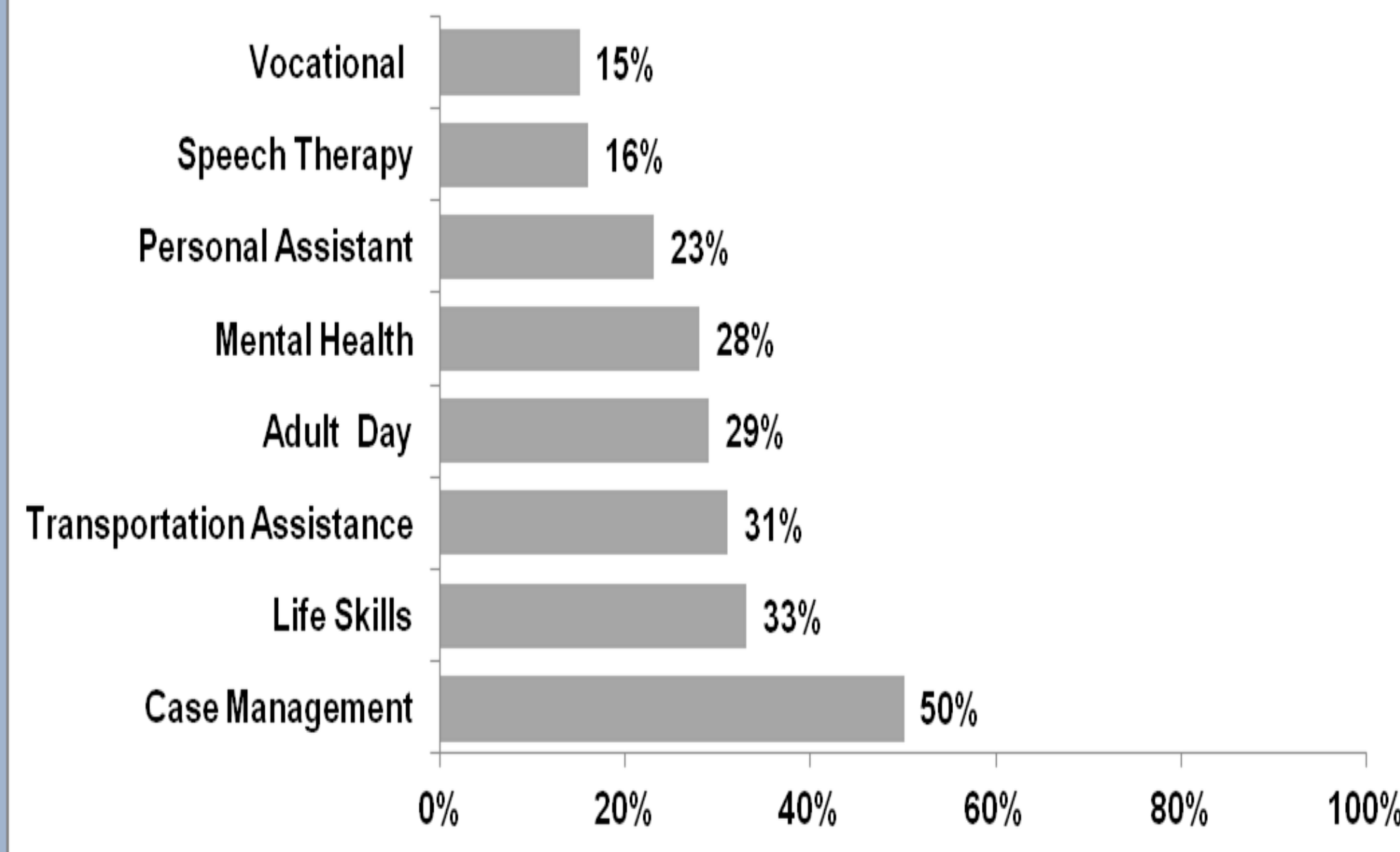
Research Questions

- Among disconnected young adults on the autism spectrum:
1. What services have they ever received in the first 8 years after high school?
 2. What *unmet* services needs do these young adults and their families report?

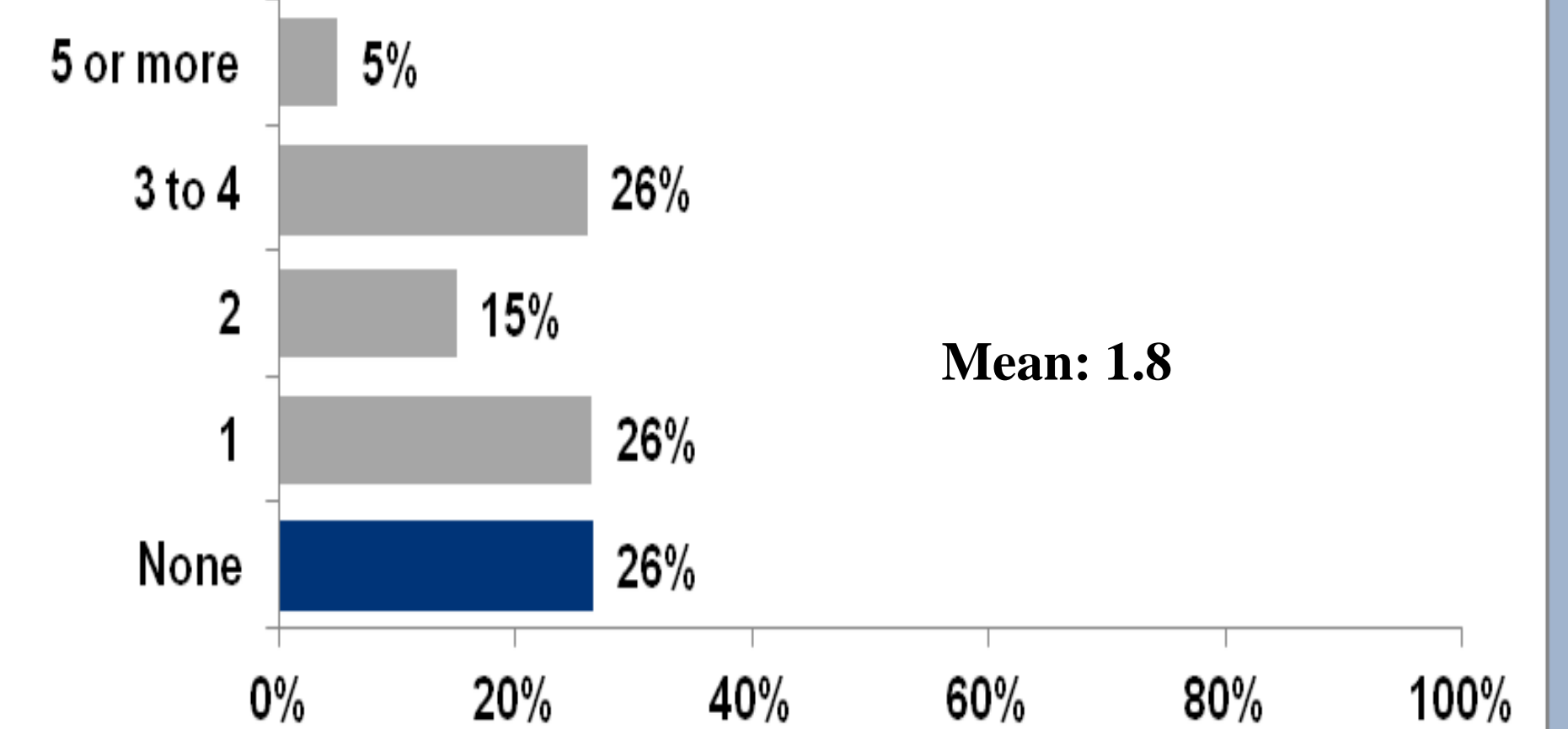
Data

- **Data Source:** National Longitudinal Transition Study-2.
- These data are from Wave 5 surveys of both parents and youth conducted in 2009 when the age range was 21-25.
- Estimates are weighted to represent the population of youth who were aged 13-17 as of 2001 and enrolled in the autism special education category.
- Male: 85%, White: 70%. Nonverbal: 17%. Parental income < \$25,000: 18%.

Services Ever Received Since High School

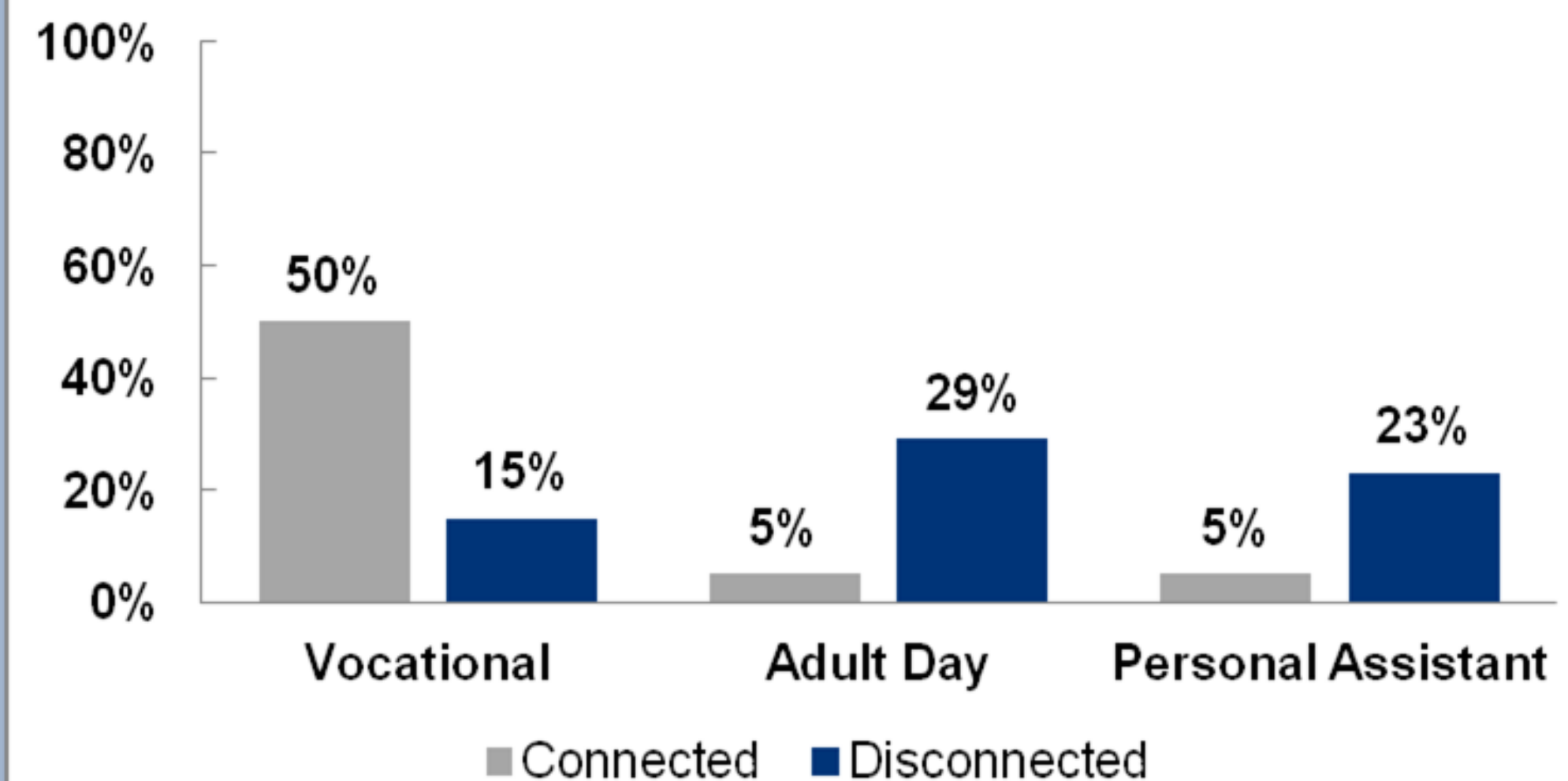


How Many Services Do They Receive?



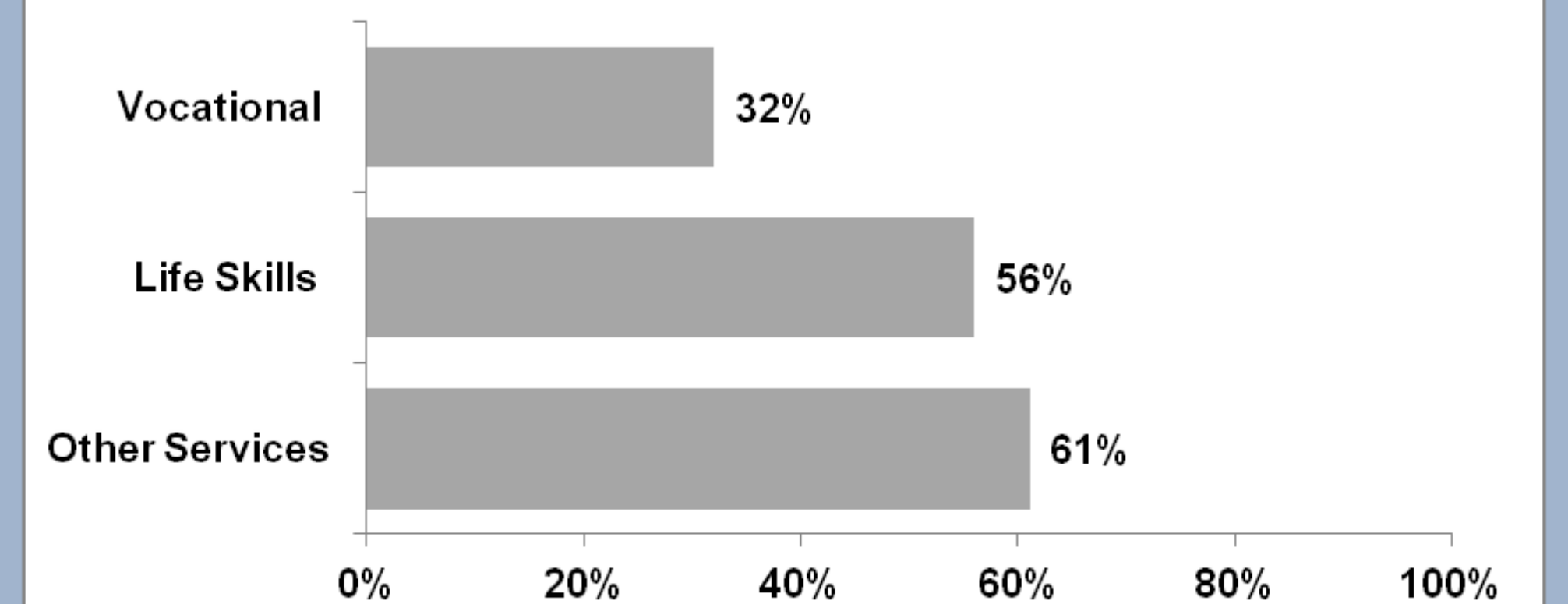
➤ One in four disconnected youth received no services since leaving high school.

Rates of Service Use for Disconnected versus Connected Youth



➤ Disconnected youth had significantly lower rates of vocational services than those who were connected, and significantly higher rates of adult recreation/day services and personal assistant services (p<.001).

Reported Need for Additional Services



Conclusions

- Over half of youth who are disconnected from school or work receive one or no services, but most report that additional services are needed.
- Only 15% of disconnected youth ever received vocational services since high school to facilitate employment or continued education.
- Further research is needed to identify possible stepping stones to prevent disconnection from needed services after high school.